

A Proclamation, set furthe by the Kynges Maiestie, With thassent and consent of his moste dere Uncle Edwarde Duke of Somerset, Gouernor of his moste royall persone, and of his dominions and Subiectes Protector, and others of his highnes priue counsaill, against enclosures, lettynge of houses to decaye, and unlawfull conuertynge of arable ground to pastures, the firste daie of June in the second yere of his maiesties moste gracious reigne.



Insomuche as the Kynges Maiestie, the Lorde Protectors grace, and the rest of his priue Counsaill, hath been aduertised and put in remembraunce, aswell by diuerse supplicacions, and pitifull complaints, of his Maiesties pooze subiectes, as also by other, wise and discrete men, hauyng care to the good orde of the realme, that of late by the inclosyng of landes and arable groundes, in diuerse and sundery places of this realme, many haue been dzyuen to extreme pouertie, and compelled to leaue the places where thei were bozne, and to seke them liuynges in other countreys, with greate miserie and pouertie: Insomuche, that where as in tyme past .x. xx. yea, in some place .C. or CC. chystian people, hath been inhabityng and kept household to the byngyng furthe and nozishyng of youthe, and to the replenishyng and fulfillyng, of his Maiesties realmes with faithfull subiectes, who might serue bothe almighty God, and the kynges maiestie to the defence of this realme, now there is nothyng kepte, but shepe or bullockes: All that lande whiche heretofore was tilled and occupied with so many men, and did byng furthe not onely diuerse families in worke and labor, but also Capōs, Hennes, Chikons, Digges and other suche furniture of the Markettes, is now gotten by insatiablen greedines of mynde, into one or twoo mennes handes, and scarcely dwelled vpon with one pooze Shephard: So that the realme thereby, is brought to a meruelous desolacion, houses decayed, parishes diminished, the force of the realme weakened, and Chystian people by the greedy coueteousnes of some men, eaten vp and deuoured of brute beastes, and dzyuen from their houses by Shepe and Bullockes. And that although of thesame thing, many and sundery complaints and lamentacions, hath been heretofore made, and by the moste wise and discrete Princes, his maiesties father and grandfather, the kynges of moste famous memoire, kyng Henry the. v. i. and kyng Henry the. v. i. i., with the consent and assent of the lordes spirituall and tempozall, in diuerse Parliaments assembled, diuerse and sundery lawes and actes of Parliaments, and moste Godly ordinaunces, in their seuerall tymes hath been made for the remedy thereof: Yet the insatiablen coueteousnes of men, doth not cease daily to encroche hereupon, and moze and moze to waste the realme, after this sorte byngyng arable groundes into pastures, and lettynge houses, whole families, and Copiholdes to fall doune, decaye, and bee waste: Wherefore, his highnes is greatly moued, bothe with a pitifull and tender zeale to his moste louyng subiectes, and specially to the pooze, whiche, is mynded to labor and travail for their liuyng, and not to liue an Idle and loyterynge life: and of a moste necessarie regarde, to the suertie and defence of his realme, whiche muste bee defended against the enemy, with force of menne, and the multitude of true Subiectes, not with flockes of Shepe, and dzyues of Beastes: And further is aduertised, that by the vngodly and vcharitable meanes aforesaid, thesaid Shepe and Oxen, beyng brought into a fewe mennes handes, a greate multitude of them beyng together, and so made greate dzyues and flockes, aswell by naturall reason, as also as it maie bee iustlie thought, by the due punishment of God, for suche vcharitablenes: greate Rottes and Murrins, bothe of Shepe and Bullockes, hath lately been sent of God, and seen in this realme, the whiche should not by all reason so sone fall, if thesame wer disparied into diuerse mennes handes, and thesaid catell also, by all likelihood of truthe should be moze chepe, beyng in many mennes handes, then as thei be now in fewe, who maie hold them dere, and tary their auantage of the Market: And therefore, by thadvice of his moste entirely beloued vnckle, the Duke of Somerset Gouernor of his persone, and Protector of all his real-

mes, Dominions, and Subiectes, and the rest of his Maiesties priue counsaill, hath waied moste depely all thesaied thynges: And vpon the foresaied considerations, and of a Princely desire and zeale, to se that Godly lawes, made with great trauaill, and approued by experience, and by the wise heddes, in the tyme of thesaied moste prudent Princes, should not be made in vaine, but put in vze and execution, hath appoynted, accordyng to thesaied Actes and Proclamaciōs, a view and enquirie to be made, of all suche as contrary to thesaied Actes and Godly ordinaunces, hath made Enclosures and Pastures, of that whiche was arable ground, or let any House, Tenement, or Mese decaye, and fall doune, or otherwise committed or doen any thyng to the contrary: of the good and wholsome articles, contained in the saied Actes: And therfore willeth and commaundeth, all his louyng subiectes, who knoweth any such defaultes and offences, contrary to the wealthe and profite of this realme of Englande, and thesaied Godly lawes and Actes of Parliament, doen and committed by any persone, whosocuer he or thei bee, to insinuate and geue informacion of the offence, to the kynges Maiesties Commissioners, who be appoynted to here thesame, so truly and faithfully, that neither for fauour nor feare, thei omitte to tell the truthe of any, nor for displeasure name any man, who is not giltye thereof: That a conuenient and speedie refozmacion, might bee made herein, to the honoz of God, and the kynges Maiestie, and the wealth and benefite of the whole realme.

God saue the Kyng.



Excusum Londini, in edibus Richardi Graftoni
Regij Impressoris.

Cum priuilegio ad imprimendum solum.